

IN THE CLAIMS:

Please amend the claims as follows:

1. (Currently amended) An apparatus for degassing a liquid (2) in a liquid transportation line comprising a supply conduit (6) for supplying the liquid (2) to a conditioning container (4), a means (13) for generating a low pressure in the conditioning container (4) and a supply container (3) being arranged downstream of the conditioning container (4) and serving for storing the degassed liquid (2). and means for selectively opening and closing a line connecting the conditioning container with the supply container below the liquid level of the supply container.
2. (Currently amended) The apparatus according to claim 1, wherein the conditioning container (4) comprises a heater (5) for the liquid (2).
3. (Currently amended) The apparatus according to ~~any one of~~ claims 1 ~~or~~ 2, wherein the conditioning container (4) comprises a supply conduit (6) having a valve (8) as well as a discharge conduit (7) having a valve (9).
4. (Currently amended) The apparatus according to claim 3, wherein the supply conduit (6) and the discharge conduit (7) are connected with the bottom (4a) of the conditioning container (4).
5. (Currently amended) The apparatus according to ~~any one of~~ claim 1 ~~to~~ 4, wherein the low pressure is generated by a ~~pre~~vacuum pump (13).
6. (Currently amended) The apparatus according to claim 5, wherein the ~~pre~~vacuum pump comprises a Venturi nozzle.

7. (Currently amended) The apparatus according to claim 5 ~~or 6~~, wherein the low pressure is 10 to 900 mbar, ~~preferably 10 to 100 mbar~~.
8. (Currently amended) The apparatus according to ~~any one of claims 1 to 7~~ claim 2 comprising a temperature sensor ~~(10)~~ for controlling the heater ~~(5)~~.
9. (Currently amended) The apparatus according to ~~any one of claims~~ claim 1 to 8 comprising a first liquid indicator ~~(11)~~ in the conditioning container ~~(1)~~ and ~~or~~ a second liquid indicator in the supply container (3).
10. (Currently amended) The apparatus according to ~~any one of claims 1 to 9~~ claim 3, wherein the discharge conduit ~~(7)~~ of the conditioning container ~~(1)~~ and an inlet conduit ~~(12)~~ of the supply container ~~(3)~~ are connected with each other via the valve ~~(9)~~.
11. (Currently amended) The apparatus according to ~~any one of claims 1 to 10~~, claim 1 comprising a pump ~~(4)~~ for pumping the liquid from the supply container ~~(3)~~ into an outlet conduit ~~(4d)~~.
12. (Currently amended) The apparatus according to claim 11, wherein the pump is a submerged pump, ~~preferably a plunger pump (4) the a piston (4a) and the a cylinder (4b) of~~ which are submerged below the surface ~~(2a)~~ of the liquid ~~(2')~~ during operation.
13. (Currently amended) The apparatus according to claim 12, wherein the ~~plunger pump (4)~~ comprises a stationary piston ~~(4a)~~ and a cylinder ~~(4b)~~ which is movable with respect to the piston ~~(4a)~~.
14. (Currently amended) The apparatus according to claim 13 wherein the piston ~~(4a)~~ has a through-opening ~~(4e)~~ which is connected with the outlet conduit ~~(4d)~~.

15. (Currently amended) The apparatus according to claim 14 wherein the cylinder (4b) comprises a check-valve (4e) which opens and allows liquid (2') to enter the cylinder (4b) when the cylinder (4b) moves away from the piston (4a) and closes when the cylinder (4b) moves towards the piston (4a), so that the liquid (2') in the cylinder (4b) is pressed through the opening (4e) into the outlet conduit (4d).

16. (Currently amended) The apparatus according to claim 15 wherein there is an atmospheric pressure in the supply container (3).

17. (Currently amended) The apparatus according to ~~any one of claims 12 to 16~~ claim 12, wherein an inlet conduit (12) of the supply container (3) is arranged below the liquid level (2a'), ~~preferably at the bottom (3a)~~ of the supply container (3).

18. (Currently amended) A method for bubble-freely pumping a liquid by ~~means of the apparatus according to any one of claims 1 to 17~~ degassing a liquid in a liquid transportation line, said method comprising the following steps:

- (a) supplying the liquid (2) into ~~the~~ a conditioning container (1);
- (b) degassing the liquid (2) by adjusting a low pressure in the conditioning container (1); and
- (c) selectively transferring the liquid (2) from the conditioning container (1) into ~~the~~ a supply container (3) below its liquid level for storing the degassed liquid.

19. (Currently amended) The method according to claim 18 ~~which is carried out by means of the apparatus according to any one of claims 12 to 17 comprising~~ wherein a plunger pump (4) is provided in the supply container (3), wherein by moving ~~the~~ a cylinder (4b) of the plunger pump away from or towards ~~the~~ a piston (4a) of the plunger pump ~~the~~ a check-valve (4e) opens or closes and liquid (2') enters the cylinder (4b) or is pumped through ~~the~~ an opening (4e) in the piston into ~~the~~ an outlet conduit (4b).

20. (Currently amended) The method according to claim 18, wherein in method step (b) the liquid (2) is degassed during a time period of 3 to 8 minutes.

21. (Currently amended) The method according to claim 18, wherein the liquid (2) in the conditioning container (1) is heated.

22. (Currently amended) The method according to claim 18, ~~19, 20 or 21~~, wherein due to a low pressure the liquid (2) is sucked into the conditioning container (1) via ~~the~~ a conduit (6).

23. (Currently amended) The apparatus ~~and the method~~ according to ~~any one of claims 1 to 17 or 18 to 22, respectively~~ claim 1, wherein the liquid (2) is a lacquer or a bonding agent.

24. (Currently amended) Use of the apparatus ~~and the method~~ according to claim 23 during the application of a lacquer or a bonding agent onto a substrate in the form of a data carrier ~~such as~~ a CD, a DVD or a DVD half.

Please add the following new claims: ---

25. (New) The apparatus according to claim 5, wherein the low pressure is 10 to 100 mbar.

26. (New) The apparatus according to claim 1 comprising a liquid indicator in the conditioning container.

27. (New) The apparatus according to claim 1 comprising a liquid indicator in the supply container.

28. (New) The apparatus of claim 12, wherein the pump is a plunger pump.

29. (New) The apparatus according to claim 17, wherein the inlet conduit is arranged at the bottom of the supply container.

30. (New) The method of claim 18, wherein the liquid is a lacquer or a bonding agent.

31. (New) The method of claim 30, wherein the lacquer or the bonding agent is applied onto a substrate in the form of a data carrier, a CD, a DVD or a DVD half. ---